

Minutes Wisconsin Small Business Environmental Council

November 14, 2019 DNR Central Office and Skype 101 South Webster St, Madison, WI Room 413 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Members Present: Amy Litscher, Greg Pils, Senator Miller, Jody Jansen, Senator Jacque (phone), Vince Ruffolo (phone)

Absent:

DNR Staff: Renee Bashel, Lisa Ashenbrenner Hunt, Jennifer Feyerherm, Beth Olson

(phone), Jean Romback-Bartels (phone), James Yach (phone)

Speakers: Bill Smith (NFIB), Erika Kluetmeier (DNR)

Public Participants: Nik Rettinger (Chief of Staff for Senator Jacque)

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Repair

WEDA Conference – Council Session

- Low turnout but good conversations with those that did attend.
- Lessons learned
 - Timing of session likely made a difference. Hard to get attendance at the very end of a conference. Conference attendance was significantly lower toward end of conference.
 - At their request, WEDA managed outreach and registration. The Executive Director was confident about attendance and asked SBEAP not to do its own marketing. Lesson learned: more control over event promotion and registration is key. Reminders to folks that had signed up for the sessions would have been a good idea.

Approve Final "Meet the Council" Article and Potential Venues for Placement

Meet the Council article

- Reviewed article used in WEDA promotion, any changes needed?
- Current article has quote from Vince. Could substitute for quotes from other members as appropriate to different publications.
- Council approves article as is.

Audience

- DNR's Sustainability and Business Support Section is launching a marketing campaign next year targeting chambers of commerce and economic development organizations. Information on the Council will be part of that outreach.
- Not all chambers are associated with WMC and therefore may not be on SBEAP's list.
 SBEAP should try to identify those chambers and include them in outreach.

- Jennifer working on effort to pitch stories to media editors.
- Suggestion that WEDA can help identify economic development contacts. Laurel has been working on. Won't provide full list but will provides contacts in specific areas.
- Suggestion that WEDC may have mailing list of economic development contacts.

Venues

- Business journals: InBusiness, Business Times, Milwaukee Business Journal.
- Business organizations / trade association newsletters: Wisconsin Bankers, Wisconsin Credit Union League.
- SBDCs at UW-Madison and others. Currently working with Melissa at UW-Stevens Point. She is working to connect SBEAP with her counterparts (statewide SBDC newsletter, etc.).
- Jody will reach out to Business News and Wisconsin Bankers.
- Amy will get contact for credit union association.

Submitting articles

- Suggestion to have SBS articles come from DNR secretary. Looking in to having the opening email to chambers come from Secretary Cole.
- Council members should submit articles. Business-to-business communication works better. Many businesses don't trust DNR.
- Amy is willing to have articles come from her.
- SBEAP will identify newsletters, council members will submit the article.

Council meeting dates and venues for 2020

- Working off last year's list of conferences.
- DNR advisory groups -
 - Amy is on Air Management Study Group; they already seem to know about SBEAP/Council.
 - Members include lobbying groups, business owners, UW representatives, etc. Each group has different membership.
 - Council could attend study group meeting, provide short presentation on Council and have open discussion.
 - Wastewater / septage hauler groups may be good fit.
- WMC Business Day (March)
 - Mostly lobbyists.
 - All in one room, no breakout sessions.
 - SBEAP staff met with head of small business committee, discussed doing lunch with Council. Didn't work out for 2019. Jennifer will follow up with committee for 2020.
 Amy also reached out to the Small Business Committee Chair but didn't hear back.
 - Possible "get to know you" meeting with Council?
- FET panel
 - Did couple years ago, high turnout and good suggestions.
 - o Get on main conference, Environment 2020, agenda in October.
 - SBEAP staff will submit proposal to have Council session.
- Ideas that came out of WEDA attendance
 - Suggestion to meet with leadership of economic development organizations such as New North.

- Wisconsin Rapids, Marshfield and other chambers in area work closely together.
 Could do panel discussion.
- o Choose events where audience is already there and Council has good time slot.
- o Good to have booth too. Talk about Council and DNR business support programs.
- Suggestion to use videos to draw people to table.
- Council will meet again in January to further discuss. SBEAP staff will get more information on events and bring to Council for discussion.

Introduction to National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

Bill Smith - Wisconsin Director of NFIB

- Invited Renee to board meeting. Board expressed suspicion of DNR.
- NFIB worked with Council years ago, want to start coordinating again. Can help Council and SBEAP get more exposure with their members. Help Council with their purpose of helping businesses understand there are ways to get into compliance without opening themselves up to liability. Fear is biggest issue. Council helps bridge that gap.
- NFIB is largest business organization in state around 10,000 members. Statewide
 presence, strongest is rural areas. Most member businesses small, fewer than 20
 employees. Member businesses mirror state business demographics. Their membership is
 the audience the Council was designed to serve.
- Question on how NFIB communicates with its members.
 - o Email cheapest but not always most effective. Members selective about opening.
 - o Some even only want communication through fax.
 - o Direct mail usually gets opened. Easier to come back to paper. More expensive.
 - o Sometimes best to call them directly.
 - o Chapters have meetings. Struggle with attendance. Providing lunch helps.
- Question if small businesses prefer to call and ask questions or get information online. Would they prefer an onsite audit?
 - Better if info comes through business community. Would prefer to contact the Council instead of DNR.
 - Audit is bad word for businesses.
- NFIB advocates for regulatory flexibility for small businesses which increases compliance.
 Most businesses will comply if they understand what to do but need more time to comply.
 State legislature has helped with this. Small Business Regulatory Review Board is important to review legislation. Senator Miller noted that there are legislators on the Council so they can hear from the regulated community and make regulations work for them.
- NFIB partnered in past with WMC on Business Day. Members no longer finding value (secretaries no longer there, don't go to capitol, don't talk to elected officials). NFIB doesn't have input into content so might do something different.
- Governor's Small Business Summit valuable to members. Scheduled for February next year.
- Question on how Council can help NFIB.
 - o Columns for media in smaller markets looking for articles. Could do joint column.
 - o Focus on Council, not DNR. Messages from small business to small business best.
- Council has two vacancies. NFIB could suggest members to appoint. One vacancy is a governor appointment and one is through Representative Vos. Bill will talk to them.

Enviro-Check Promotional Update

Frika Kluetmeier - DNR

- Showed new rack card being distributed.
- News release went out October 22, ahead of Secretary Cole's speech at FET.
- Already generating some buzz.
- Internal promotion in employee newsletter and emails to regional business support teams.
- Revamped website. Notify Erika of suggestions. Still working on forms.
- Article in Small Business Advisor Newsletter.
- Beginning copyright process.
- Couple speaking engagements scheduled.
- Also planning online ads and other targeted marketing.
- Launch to be integrated into greater marketing campaign of business support resources.
- Recommendation not to use "audit". Make language friendlier.
- Introduction paragraph on website and graphics good.
- Let Erika know if Council needs any other resources to discuss the program.
- Question if option for DNR to do audit. SBEAP does site visits but aren't official audits.
- Recommendation to find ways to offset cost for small businesses.
- Discussion of municipalities or other entities doing similar audits (wastewater, etc.)
 Regulatory inspections wouldn't count for Enviro-Check, but inspectors may not penalize if issues fixed. Note that many agencies use progressive enforcement in similar way.

Discuss Compliance Audit Program Legislation

Senator Jacque, Senator Miller

- Hearings have been positive. Amy testified at one. No committee vote yet.
- DNR prefers to retain the 30-day waiting period but supports the other proposed alignments with EPA's audit programs.
- Additional amendment from Senator Miller to keep 30-day notice will be withdrawn as per Council consensus.
- Official Council recommendation that DNR notification by a business wanting to enter the compliance audit program is optional.
- Senators will send email from Council to both chairs, Kitchens and Cowles, supporting bill.
 Amy will send one too.

Sustainability and Business Support Section Biennial Report

Erika Kluetmeier – DNR

- Erika is project manager for the biennial report.
- Formerly Green Tier Biennial Report, now encompassing all business support services.
- Last year in PDF format but not supported on all browsers.
- Ok to go fully digital this time? Could have interactive features, more options to tell programs' stories. Could have downloadable summary that could be printed.
- Recommendations: digital format using links to keep report shorter is good; but it is also nice
 to have a paper version to put in box, take notes on, etc. so should have printable format
 too. Hybrid format best.

Public comment

None

Action items:

- SBEAP staff will try to identify chambers not associated with WMC.
- SBEAP staff will contact WEDC about economic development contacts.
- Jody will reach out to Business Times and Wisconsin Bankers.
- Amy will get contact information for credit union association.
- SBEAP staff will continue to identify newsletters for publishing Council article. Council members will submit.
- Jennifer will continue working on being able to pitch stories to media editors.
- Jennifer will follow up with Brittney at WMC about connecting Council and WMC Small Business Committee.
- SBEAP staff will get more information on proposed events for next meeting.
- SBEAP staff will submit proposal to FET for Environment 2020 Council presentation.
- SBEAP staff will mail Enviro-Check rack card to Vince.
- Amy will send letter supporting the compliance audit legislation with the first amendment from Senators Miller and Jacque and without the 2nd proposed amendment from Senator Miller to both chairs, Kitchens and Cowles.
- Renee will provide Amy contact information for the chairs.

Next meeting: January 9, 10:00-12:00